

MARICOPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTE BOOK

**SPECIAL SESSION
April 10, 2002**

The Board of Supervisors of Maricopa County, Arizona convened at 12:00 p.m., April 10, 2002, at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 420 West Watkins Road, Phoenix, Arizona, with the following members present: Don Stapley, Chairman; Mary Rose Wilcox, Max W. Wilson and Fran McCarroll, Clerk of the Board. Absent: Fulton Brock, Vice Chairman; and Andy Kunasek. Also present: David Smith, County Administrative Officer; and Paul Golab, Deputy County Attorney.

EVENT LUNCHEON FOR THE HUMAN SERVICES CAMPUS -“SHARING AND CARING”

Item: Event Luncheon for the Human Services Campus. (ADM 2519)

Chairman Don Stapley expressed his pleasure for the opportunity to participate in the “Sharing and Caring” Event in support of the Human Services Campus. Local governments and the community have long attempted to deal with the homelessness problem, an issue that has no simple answer. In April 2001, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors took the initiative to develop a plan for a multi-agency, multi-service campus that would provide services to the homeless and at-risk population in the downtown Phoenix area. Hence, the idea of the “Human Service Campus” was born. Representatives from many of the organizations who deal daily with homelessness issues worked to coordinate a plan that would better focus their efforts.

Chairman Stapley acknowledged Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox and former Board member, Jan Brewer, who were instrumental in Maricopa County’s lead for this initiative. He also recognized Supervisor Max W. Wilson, State Senator Tom Smith, and Dr. Sandra Dowling, Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools, who were in attendance.

Supervisor Wilcox provided an overview of the history and mission of the Human Services Campus. She stated that homelessness in the Valley began to increase dramatically during 1982 when poor economic conditions and high unemployment figures, coupled with policy changes, negatively impacted mental health services. Meanwhile, the City of Phoenix was attempting a renaissance in the downtown core and razed areas such as “The Duece”, a blighted area known for low-income housing. This left approximately 1,500 individuals homeless, many of whom were mentally ill, had low incomes, or were unemployed. These individuals began to congregate in the area of Madison Street and 9th Avenue, near St. Vincent de Paul, and “Tent City” was created. Also during that time in 1982, Phoenix residents voted to amend the city’s charter for council representation from an “at-large” system to a district system, and attempts were made to tackle the homeless problem. The Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS) was formed and was intended to be a temporary agency to address the problem. Two decades later, CASS is still in existence.

Supervisor Wilcox explained that, although many good ideas surfaced and several plans were discussed, there was no dedicated funding to implement the plans or develop a central intake center. All of the funds received for the program were used to provide direct service. In 1998, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) assumed distribution of federal funds. MAG representatives, including Supervisors Wilcox and Brewer, traveled to Santa Clara County, California to observe an exemplary program. They came away with the idea to combine all of the human service providers in the downtown area and build a central intake facility to coordinate case management services from one central location. Maricopa County leadership decided to appropriate \$6.7 million to implement this concept.

Supervisor Wilcox read the mission of the program as follows:

"The mission of the Human Services Campus is to deliver high-quality human services and provide leadership and innovative solutions to help break the cycle of homelessness and poverty through collaboration among faith-based, governmental, non-profit, private, and community organizations."

David Smith, CAO, described this endeavor as coming from the head and heart, and a lot of planning was involved to make it happen. A sound business plan was needed, which was subsequently written and published in the booklet given to attendees. The plan allows for foresight to anticipate various issues or problems. The next requirement was a broad-based consortium to act as a foundation.

Mr. Smith continued by stating that it will take a great amount of work to allow the various organizations to keep their autonomy while providing overall governance for common issues and intake. Currently, many of the service organizations are drained and need to relocate to an area with other service providers where they can pool resources and provide a better service delivery system that can change lives.

Mark Holleran, a service provider with CASS, provided an overview of the populations to be served: the mentally ill, homeless, low-income, and drug and alcohol abusers. Services would include assistance with short- and long-term housing. A long-term housing program started in 1996 has provided assistance for some individuals who have utilized the program for 4 or more years. Currently, those individuals are making good choices and becoming self-sufficient.

Steve Zabilski, a St. Vincent de Paul service provider, explained that coordinating efforts would allow for better service delivery. With the current, non-integrated system, service providers span a 4 to 6 city block area. Security problems became an added issue, creating an ineffective way to deliver services. The vision of the Human Services Campus is to provide a place where families can volunteer to help other families and individuals in need. Mr. Zabilski commented, "This would be the mark of a great community".

MiAsia Pasha, a former client of CASS, expressed her gratefulness for the services she received and felt that the Human Services Campus plan was long overdue. Ms. Pasha testified that ten years ago, she was homeless, living on the streets, and drug addicted. Now, she has her own business and is on the Board of Directors for CASS. She states that when homelessness does not directly affect you, it is easy to ignore the issue. Ms. Pasha recited a poem entitled "Imagine Being Homeless."

Martin Shultz, Arizona Public Service, discussed his participation in the downtown redevelopment plan, which included such large projects as the Arizona Center, America West Arena, and BankOne Ballpark, all east of Central Avenue. While serving on the Capital Mall Committee, he came face-to-face with the homeless issue.

Mr. Shultz continued that the community has the capacity to care about the homeless, but a resolution would require the combined efforts of the private and public sectors, the community and faith-based providers. Mr. Schultz remarked that very good business minds collaborated on the business plan, and acknowledged Maricopa County for stepping up to be the leaders in this plan and reaching beyond traditional government horizons.

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Mr. Schultz stated that the next step in realizing this project is to take a serious look at the business plan, which includes a financial plan. The total campaign goal is \$25.5 million with targets set at 50% each for the public and private sectors. Some commitments have already been received, including some significant anonymous gifts, a \$1 million donation from the Stardust Foundation, and a commitment from the Catholic Diocese of Phoenix. Mr. Schultz further explained that the project organizers hope to complete the fundraising portion of the campaign by calendar year-end. An architect has been hired and the property is currently being negotiated.

The Reverend Paul Eppinger offered the final blessing.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Don Stapley, Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:

Fran McCarroll, Clerk of the Board